

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to polypeptides encoded by a nucleotide sequence from an HIV-1, HIV-2, or SIV viral genome, in which the nucleotide sequence is amplified from the viral genome using a pair of primers that contain sequences that are conserved between different HIV and SIV strains. The primers are insensitive to variations in the genomes of different HIV and SIV isolates and, therefore, can be used to amplify nucleotide sequences from HIV-1, HIV-2, and SIV strains. The invention also relates to antibodies directed against these polypeptides and methods and kits for diagnosing viral infection.

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